

world. We have full understanding on this with President Bush, similar to our mutual understanding of many other international development problems.

We have many points of coincidence of our views on many issues. And it is precisely these things that enable me to call President Bush my friend, not only personally—because personally I do like him a lot—but as my counterpart and the President of a friendly nation.

To repeat, we have many points on which we see eye-to-eye on many aspects of international development. As for Iran—and I repeated that during today's meeting and discussion—we are against using the pretext of nuclear weapon program of Iran as a leverage in—as an instrument of unfair competition against us. And we will continue working together with all, including the United States, with the view to preventing proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction anywhere in the world, including of course in Iran.

Moderator. And the final question.

War on Terrorism

Q. First of all, this is a question directed to President Putin. Do you believe that there are any questions that remain that are irresolvable? And what can we do more together, more cooperatively, in international way, to combat terrorism?

President Putin. I don't even think that we have ever had any insurmountable problems that cannot be overcome. There are always problems. They become more or less visible or obvious; much depends on us as to how do we address those problems and issues. The most important thing is the presence or absence of a will to address those. President Bush and I do have such a will. And we will do our best to achieve such a state where the points of coincidence would grow in number, and we will have fewer points of divergence and problems and issues of content. And this trend will become even more efficient and effective should we have assistance and a helping hand from the mass media. [Laughter]

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 10:07 a.m. at Konstantin Palace. President Putin

spoke in Russian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin on U.S.- Russian Cooperation in Space

June 1, 2003

The loss of the Space Shuttle *Columbia* has underscored the historic role of the United States and Russia as partners in space exploration, who have persevered despite tragedy and adversity. During this challenging time, our partnership has deepened and the International Space Station (ISS) program remains strong. The extraordinary efforts of our countries continue. The United States is committed to safely returning the Space Shuttle to flight, and the Russian Federation is committed to meeting the ISS crew transport and logistics resupply requirements necessary to maintain our joint American astronaut and Russian cosmonaut teams on board the ISS until the Space Shuttle returns to flight.

We confirm our mutual aspiration to ensure the continued assembly and viability of the International Space Station as a world-class research facility, relying on our unprecedented experience of bilateral and multilateral interaction in space. We reaffirm our commitment to the mission of human space flight and are prepared to take energetic steps to enhance our cooperation in the application of space technology and techniques.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin on the New Strategic Relationship

June 1, 2003

On May 24, 2002, we pledged to build a new strategic relationship between the United States of America and the Russian Federation. We declared our partnership, and our commitment to work together to advance stability, security, and prosperity for